Police clueless about Ahmadi man's attacker in Khushab

By Our Correspondent

CHINIOT: The perpetrator(s) of the targeted assassination attempt on a prominent member of the Ahmadiyya Community in Khushab remain at large, raising serious concerns at the law and order situation and unchecked rise of religious extremism in the area.

On Dec 29, the 55-year-old Ahmadi man was returning home from his farmhouse on a motorcycle when an unidentified assailant fired at him from behind. A bullet pierced his abdomen, causing life-threatening internal injuries. He was rushed to the DHQ Hospital where he underwent an emergency surgery and was later shifted to a private medical facility. He is on a ventilator, fighting for his life. He had no personal enmities or disputes.

The spokesperson for the Ahmadiyya community, Amir Mahmood, condemned the attack, stating that this incident was not an isolated act of violence but rather the culmination of a long-standing hate campaign against the Ahmadis in district Khushab, openly incited by extremist elements.

The Ahmadiyya community expressed grave concerns at the lack of police action despite the seriousness of the crime. The spokesman referred to a mob that gathered outside the ancestral home of the victim's family, following the attack. Videos of the incident were circulated widely on social media, further aggravating fear and insecurity among the community, it said.

Children 'killed' by mother buried in native village

By Our Correspondent

GUJRAT: The three children who were allegedly killed by their mother and her paramour after being kidnapped, were buried in the local graveyard of their native village Brind in Sara-i-Alamgir on Thursday.

In a joint operation of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Police and Gujrat Police, the bodies of the children of the gruesome incident were recovered from a deserted place in Bhimber district of Azad Kashmir on Wednesday. The bodies were then shifted to the Sara-i-Alamgir THQ Hospital.

The doctors conducted the autopsy of the deceased on Thursday and the bodies were later handed over to the heirs.

Both suspects Sidra Shabeer, the mother of the deceased children, and her alleged paramour Babar Hussain had already been arrested by the Gujrat Police.

Police produced the 26-year-old suspect Sidra in the court of a local magistrate in Sara-i-Alamgir and sought her physical remand. The court handed her over to the police on a five-day physical remand on Thursday, whereas the main suspect, Babar Hussain, had earlier been handed over to the police for a seven-day physical remand on Tuesday.

Plea for provision of medicines, facilities in public hospitals

LAHORE: A petition has been filed in the Lahore High Court, highlighting the shortage of medicines and the unavailability of facilities in the public hospitals.

The Judicial Activism Panel Chairman Advocate Azhar Siddique filed the petition, pointing out that life-saving medicines and essential surgical equipment are not available in public hospitals.

The petition stated that patients are being forced to purchase medicines and necessary supplies from the open market. It expressed regret that despite the allocation of substantial funds for the public hospitals, patients are not being provided the required facilities.

It further stated that Rs679 billion had been allocated for patients' treatment and although projects for children's heart surgeries and clinic-on-wheels were announced, they were not fully implemented.

The petition asked the court to order the provision of all facilities to patients in the public hospitals and the formation of a committee to ensure the availability of these facilities. — **Staff Reporter**

LAHORE: Children at New Year festival at Naulakha church participate in a race to keep themselves warm on a cold Thursday. — White Star

Relevant depts empowered to control commodities prices

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Punjab Price and Commodities Management department has delegated its price control powers to different departments to ensure advance management of essential commodities and their continuous availability in the market.

The decision was taken at the Punjab Price Control Council meeting chaired by Special Assistant for Price Control Salma Butt here on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by MPAs Muhammad Bilal Yamin, Chaudhry Javed Ahmed and Farzana Abbas as well as price control department secretary Dr Kiran Khurshid, Chairman Sahulat Bazaar Authority Afzal Khokhar, Director General Enforcement Imran Qureshi and other senior officers.

During the meeting, two summaries were presented and approved. One summary pertained to the nomination of three private experts to the Price Control Council, which was approved by the council members.

Approving the second summary related to the delegation of powers and responsibilities of the provincial controllers general and the secretary price control to relevant officers, the council approved delegation of powers concerning 49 essential commodities to various departments in order to ensure uninterrupted supply across Punjab.

Price control powers related to oxygen gas cylinders, surgical gloves, face masks, all types of surface cleaners and isopropyl alcohol have been delegated to the health department secretary, while powers concerning all types of seeds, grains and agricultural pesticides have been assigned to the agriculture department secretary.

The powers related to vegetable oil, ghee, mineral water, filtered water, ice, tea, LPG, LNG and bricks were delegated to the director general industries.

Price control powers regarding milk, yogurt, mutton, beef and eggs had been assigned to the director general extension, livestock and dairy development, while powers related to poultry feed and live and meat broiler chicken had been delegated to the director general research, livestock and dairy development.

According to the decisions, powers related to sand, crushed gravel, coal, cement, kerosene oil and salt had been delegated to the director general mines and minerals.

Powers concerning wheat, flour, fine flour, naan, roti, bread, sugar, gur, paddy and samosas had been assigned to the director general food and the cane commissioner. Powers related to all types of fruits, vegetables, pulses, spices and dates had been delegated to the director general Punjab Agriculture Marketing Regulatory Authority, while powers concerning all types of fertilisers, chemicals and cotton had been assigned to the deputy director agriculture extension, Punjab.

PbBC suspends licence of Rajab's lawyer for court appearance despite strike

By Wajih Ahmad Sheikh

LAHORE: The Punjab Bar Council (PbBC) has suspended the practice licence of Advocate Mian Ali Ashfaq, primarily for representing TikToker Rajab Butt before a Karachi court despite a strike called by the local bar.

As per an order issued by PbBC Executive Committee Chairman Zabiullah Nagra, the action was taken after receiving a letter from the president and secretary general of the Karachi Bar Association.

The letter drew the council's attention to a video circulating on social media in which Advocate Ashfaq was seen in the Karachi City Courts while representing the TikToker during an ongoing lawyers' strike.

The strike had been called in protest against the alleged victimisation of the Karachi Bar Association's former librarian, Naseer Muhammad Kalhoro. During the strike, judicial proceedings were strictly prohibited within the city courts premises, the order said.

It further observed that the lawyer appeared before the courts despite the strike, allegedly accompanied by private guards or individuals in clear violation of the strike restrictions and the established canons of the legal profession. The order noted that while defending his client, the lawyer made statements against the legal fraternity, which the PbBC described as serious professional impropriety.

"These remarks reportedly caused divisions within the legal fraternity, leading to confrontation and discord among lawyers," it added.

The Council observed that Advocate Ashfaq's conduct created an atmosphere of dispute and disharmony, gravely damaging the reputation, unity and collective integrity of the legal community. After examining his professional record, the executive committee noted that Mr Ashfaq was enrolled as an advocate with the PbBC in 2010 and the high court in 2012.

As a practicing lawyer, the council asserted, Mr Ashfaq was duty-bound to uphold the dignity and high standing of the legal profession at all times.

The executive committee unanimously decided to suspend Advocate Ashfaq's licence to practice law with immediate effect. The committee referred the matter to the disciplinary committee of the Council for further proceedings regarding the permanent cancellation of the licence in accordance with law.

Talking to Dawn, Mr Nagra said the Punjab Bar Council, as a statutory regulatory body, is not required to issue a prior notice before suspending a lawyer's licence in cases involving professional misconduct.

He said every enrolled advocate is presumed to have full knowledge of the code of conduct prescribed under the bar council rules and is duty-bound to comply with it.

Mr Nagra added that the lawyer concerned had been found involved in activities unbecoming of a member of the legal profession for quite some time.Advocate Ali Ashfaq has also been appearing as counsel for former spymaster Faiz Hameed in the trial concluded against him before a military court.

214 FIA officers punished in four months for human trafficking, corruption

The officials ranging from constables to deputy directors found guilty in 214 departmental inquiries

By Asif Chaudhry

LAHORE: Following the rising complaints of human trafficking and corruption, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has dismissed 76 officials from service, demoted nine to the lower ranks and sacked two others besides awarding punishments to 127 others. The agency punished 214 officials in total during the last four months of 2015.

The scope of action was expanded on a wider scale following the reforms introduced within the agency by forming the first Directorate of Internal Accountability (DIA) at the FIA Headquarters in August 2025 to control its corrupt officers. The FIA also replicated similar structures at the zonal level under zonal directors.

A senior official said the FIA introduced a strict accountability mechanism to round up the human trafficking elements with itself in the aftermath of the boat incidents in Europe and Africa in which a large number of Pakistanis lost their lives. In a high level inquiry, it was revealed that a number of FIA officials were also involved in human smuggling. Similarly, a report published by the IMF, titled Pakistan: Governance and Corruption Diagnostic, in November 2025 also indicated corruption in public departments as a major reason for their inefficiency.

In order to address the complaints, FIA Director General Riffat Mukhtar Raja relegated the powers of accountability to the level of additional director generals of the North and South zones and to zonal directors so that they could take meaningful actions against officers of up to the grade of 16.

In addition, an online technology module for DIA was developed to track the progress and output of each inquiry from complaint till disposal level, including appeal process. This module provided ready access for the senior officers to monitor the progress of inquiries internally, the officer said.

As a result of the measures, the FIA penalised its officials from constable to the level of deputy directors in 214 departmental inquiries. The officer informed that 20pc punishments were awarded for immigration-related complaints, another 20pc were against the officials who had conducted faulty investigations and 40pc of punishments were awarded over indiscipline and inefficiency. The actions initiated by the zonal directors and additional director generals were in addition to these penalties, he said.

The FIA has 12 zones in the country from Gilgit-Baltistan to Karachi and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while Azad Jammu & Kashmir is still out of its ambit.

A major shift was consolidation of complete process from complaints to conclusion of inquiries, including preliminary, fact-finding or departmental ones, under one directorate and taking it out of the ambit of human resource department of the FIA to avoid concentration of powers under one head and to attach high importance to the process of the DIA.

Earlier, he said, there was a branch working for the same task but it had segregated functions and it was not possible to track the complaints and analyse the data from a heap of information. Another main issue was the lack of a dedicated directorate which would work as a lynchpin for the director general FIA and the secretary Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control. With the DIA, both issues were addressed and the DG FIA was able to streamline the whole process as it was a highly desired change for the key decision-makers, especially when the NCCIA issues surfaced.

About the reforms, which led to the major punishments to the FIA officers in such a large number, the source said the Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control had extended full support as he had assigned the task of clean-up of the FIA from inefficient and corrupt officials to address the issues of inefficiency and corruption. He said the minister himself visited the airports and the FIA establishments to propose action against the officials in order to improve service delivery.

Faisalabad to have country's first chip-making unit: minister

The unit will boost mobile phone assembling sector

By Tariq Saeed

TOBA TEK SINGH: The maiden computer chip manufacturing unit of Pakistan will be established in Faisalabad, while the government has already allotted 50 acres of land for the construction of a state-of-the-art expo centre in M-3 Industrial Estate, says Chaudhary Shafay Hussain, Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce and Investment.

As per a press release issued on Thursday, the minister was addressing the business community at the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) on Wednesday night.

He said that the chip-manufacturing unit will boost the mobile phone assembling plants already operating in Faisalabad, Karachi and Lahore.

He said the proposed expo centre may be constructed with funding from Export Development Fund (EDF).

Mr Hussain said the government has made key decisions for the expeditious colonisation of M3 and Allama Iqbal industrial estates.

He said that a community centre will be constructed, in addition to the completion of a boundary wall and establishment of a monitoring cell, for the foreigners working on the M3 and Allama Iqbal industrial estates.

The minister said that steps are being taken to provide banking and commercial facilities to the industrial units operating in these industrial estates. He said that similar steps are also being taken to fully colonise the industrial estates across the province.

He said that the government has initiated a programme to enhance cotton production and in this respect high-yield and disease-resistant seeds are being developed through R&D.

About the Small Industrial Estate in Faisalabad, he said its infrastructure issues are being resolved, while Punjab government is also offering interest-free loans under Asan Karobar Scheme.

He said three women training centres would be established during 2026 in Gujrat, Layyah and Sahiwal, while Faisalabad would also get this facility in the second phase.

He said that Faisalabad and Shymkent, a city of Kazakhstan are being declared twin cities, which will open new avenues of cooperation between these major industrial cities.

Mr Farooq Yousaf Sheikh, President of the FCCI, said that colonisation of M-3 and Allama Iqbal industrial estates has been geared up.

He pointed out that the trust deficit between the government institutions and the private sector has dampened exports. He said that 32 departments are harassing the industrial sector while containers already cleared by the customs officials are being intercepted on their way to the port city.

He also pointed out the rise in the cost of production due to the exorbitant hike in the prices of electricity and gas. Similarly, refunds which were earlier being cleared within 15 days, are now paid to the exporters after 90 days. "This has prompted a liquidity crunch among the exporters," he said and added that the business community could enhance exports to $100bn if a congenial atmosphere and uninterrupted policies are introduced.

FCCI Vice President Engr Asim Munir, Executive Members Muhammad Ali, Waheed Khaliq Ramay, former president Muzammil Sultan, Najam Afzal, Mujtaba Hassan, Riaz ul Haq, Saqib Majeed, Tanvir Riaz and Muhammad Tayyab participated in the question-answer session.